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West German "Trigger" Contingent Ready

The West German team which will have its finger on the trigger of the nuclear rockets on the first ship of the scheduled NATO multilateral force is all packed and ready to go, West German Defence Minister Kai-Uwe von Hassel announced at the beginning of April.

The West German military contingent, consisting of two naval officers and 47 petty officers and sailors, is in training for service on the United States rocket cruiser "Biddle", a 4,500 ton vessel. The West German contingent will be larger than the combined contingents of Holland, Italy, Greece and Turkey, and will be the largest unit of the mixed crew after the Americans.

Following the news that the first West German units were to be granted co-control of the nuclear rockets on the "Biddle", which is planned as the first vessel of a mixed-manned fleet, the Government of the German Democratic Republic published on April 7th the text of a note which it had dispatched in January to a total of 97 nations, including all NATO states.

The GDR note pointed out that the steps now being taken to establish the NATO multi-lateral force, with West German participation, were a clear breach of the resolution adopted unanimously by the General Assembly of the United Nations on December 14th 1961. This resolution, introduced by the Irish Republic, stressed "the necessity of an international agreement, subject to international inspection and control, whereby the powers producing nuclear weapons would refrain from relinquishing control of such weapons to a nation not possessing them, and whereby powers not possessing such weapons would refrain from manufacturing them."

After quoting this UN resolution, the GDR note continued:

"The NATO multi-lateral nuclear force would give the West German Federal Republic co-control of nuclear weapons, and open the road to West German possession of such weapons. Co-control by West Germany would have a special character, since the West German Federal Republic is the sole European country which does not recognise the existing frontiers, which makes large territorial claims on other states, and which demands a revision of the results of the Second World War. Participation of the West German Federal Republic in a NATO multilateral force would therefore be a particular danger to world peace.

"The West German Government is trying in three ways to gain control of nuclear weapons:

1. Through participation in the scheme for a NATO multi-lateral force.
2. Through the West-German-French Pact.
3. Through preparing to produce its own nuclear weapons.

"At present it is concentrating on the multi-lateral force, since it believes this will be quickest.

"The facts show that co-control by West Germany of the American and British nuclear arsenal would in fact lead to independent control of nuclear weapons by the West German Federal Republic."

The GDR note then cites the fact that a major part of NATO nuclear ground-force weapons are already stored in West Germany; that West German units are trained to use these weapons; that the whole structure of the Bundeswehr is based upon nuclear war plans; and that West German officers have great influence on the NATO staffs planning the use of such weapons.

"Now the West German Federal Republic only lacks the key to use

(cont. on next page)

What did you do in the Great War, Vater?

(cartoon by Vicky, "Evening Standard", London)

(cont. from front page)

the weapons of mass destruction stationed on its territory. Nobody should believe that any NATO treaty clauses will be sufficient to prevent West Germany from converting co-control of nuclear weapons into national control of these weapons. The world has had bitter experiences in the past of the way in which the German militarists treat apparently binding treaties."

The GDR further pointed out that once the West German forces were given co-control of nuclear weapons, they would be in a position to hamper or sabotage any moves for international agreement on disarmament.

The note continued:

"In view of these dangers, the Government of the German Democratic Republic urges that no further nations be given possession or joint control over nuclear weapons.

"The Government of the GDR is ready to do everything in its power to prevent a further spreading of nuclear weapons. After two world wars launched by German imperialism, both German states have a special duty to struggle for disarmament and against a spread of nuclear weapons.

"The German Democratic Republic is therefore ready to pledge complete renunciation of nuclear weapons if the West German Federal Republic will make a similar pledge.

Such a pledge by both German states should include the following points:

1. Renunciation of the construction of nuclear weapons, at home or abroad, alone or with foreign help.

2. Renunciation of the acquisition or use of nuclear weapons, or of production blue-prints or scientific research results connected therewith.

3. Renunciation of co-control over nuclear weapons, directly or indirectly through third parties.

4. Renunciation of any participation in nuclear weapon testing or use of nuclear weapons.

"The German Democratic Republic is ready to agree to a stringent international control of such a pledge. This could be exercised by a commission composed of equal numbers of representatives of the Warsaw Pact states and the NATO states, or by some other international body established with the cooperation of the United Nations. The German Democratic Republic will welcome and support any initiative which will help the two German states to reach an understanding on renunciation of nuclear weapons, thus clearing the road for nuclear disarmament."

GDR PAYS TRIBUTE TO U.S. RESISTANCE HEROINE

The German Democratic Republic has just issued a stamp honouring the memory of Mildred Harnack, prominent American resistance fighter, and her husband Arvid Harnack, both hanged by the nazis during World War Two.

The stamp, one of a series commemorating anti-nazi martyrs, shows portraits of the two Harnacks, and, in the background, a picture of them at work producing an underground newspaper.

Mildred Harnack, née Mildred Fish, was born in Milwaukee, USA on September 16th 1902, and studied at Wisconsin University in Madison. She met her husband, a German exchange student, during the course of her studies, and returned to Germany with him about 1930. She became lecturer in American Literature at Berlin University, and translated many American books into German. She played a leading part in a broadly-based resistance group which her husband helped to found after Hitler came to power, and was arrested together with Arvid Harnack on September 1942, when the Gestapo had managed to penetrate the group.

At her first trial, held in secret before the Reich Military Court in December 1942, Mildred Harnack was sentenced to six years imprisonment. Hitler was furious when he was informed of the "light sentence", and he personally ordered that she be sentenced to death. Mildred Harnack was executed on February 16th 1943; she spent her last hours in the death cell translating one of Goethe's sonnets into English.

Her husband, Arvid Harnack, became interested in socialism at an early age, and during his period of study in Wisconsin did research on the labour movement in the United States. His doctor's dissertation at Giessen University when he returned to Germany was entitled "The Marxist Workers' Movement in the United States".

Entering the German civil service, his talents brought him promotion, and when he was finally arrested he held the rank of Senior Counsellor (Oberregierungsrat) in the Reich Ministry of the Economy. This high position in a nazi ministry provided good cover for his underground work, and enabled him to provide his resistance group with invaluable inside information. He was executed on December 22nd 1942.

He was one of the founders of the Schulze-Boysen/Harnack resistance group, which has gone into history as the "Rote Kapelle", a derogatory nickname invented by the Gestapo. This group, which ranged in membership from Communists to conservative Catholic anti-nazis, was one of the biggest and most successful of all underground groups; it had members in the "Forschungsamt", Goering's private secret service; in the Foreign Ministry; and in the Ministry of Propaganda. One branch of the group maintained clandestine radio transmitters which provided very valuable military information for the Allies; other branches conducted sabotage, issued clandestine newspapers for foreign slave workers, and helped smuggle arms to partisan groups in the occupied countries.

GDR and Zanzibar

Wolfgang Kiesewetter, Deputy Foreign Minister of the GDR, visited Zanzibar from March 19th to 31st. He had talks with President Obeid Karume, Vice-President Kassim Hanga, Foreign Minister Abdul Rahman Mohamed Babu and other members of the government.

Herr Kiesewetter also paid a visit to Dar-es-Salaam on March 25th, where he was received by President Nyerere for an exchange of views on the situation in the two German states and in East Africa.

The "Von Paulus Army"

By John Peet

Older readers will recall that towards the end of World War Two there were various wild stories circulated about the "Von Paulus Army". This was supposed to be a vast army composed of German POWs, raised in the Soviet Union under the command of Field Marshal Friedrich von Paulus who was captured at Stalingrad. This ghost army spooked through the columns of some western papers for a year or two; it was always on the point of invading West Germany, or Iran, or intervening in the Civil War in Greece, but it never put in an appearance, and references to it slowly faded away.

There never was any "Von Paulus Army"; but the rumours were not entirely void of substance. There was, in fact, a large organisation of Germans in the Soviet Union, composed largely of POWs, but it was a political organisation, and not an army. It was called the Free Germany National Committee, and was formed in Moscow in July 1943.

The history of the Free Germany Committee, which played a quite substantial role on the eastern front in the closing stages of World War Two, is one of the big untold stories of the war. Several interesting books on the subject have appeared in the German Democratic Republic, and one or two polemical and unreliable attacks in West Germany, but as far as I know, no proper account is available in English.

The history of the Free Germany Committee really begins long before its formation, in July 1941, when Hitler attacked the Soviet Union. German refugees living in the Soviet Union immediately asked for an opportunity to join in the anti-fascist fight, and they made propaganda broadcasts, prepared leaflets to drop on the advancing German troops, and some brave men and women were parachuted into Germany itself to organise underground resistance. They were joined by a few — a very few — German anti-fascists who had been conscripted into the Wehrmacht and who managed to desert to the Red Army. The first of these deserters, incidentally, was a German Communist who made his way across no-man's land a few hours before the nazi attack, and warned the local Red Army commanders.

During the course of 1942, these anti-fascists managed to recruit a number of adherents in the POW camps, but it was not until the massive defeat inflicted on the Wehrmacht at Stalingrad in February 1943 that the trickle turned into a flood. German officers and men, who until then had been dazzled, scared or bamboozled by Hitler's apparently unbroken succession of military victories, began to ask what had gone wrong.

More and more of them turned against Hitler; their motivations were legion, and often very mixed. Some were shocked by what they had seen of nazi treatment of the "subject races"; more were simply convinced that the war was lost for Germany, and that the longer it lasted the worse things would be for everyone, including their own families back in Germany.

As a result of this feeling in the POW camps, which spread upwards into the very highest ranks of the captured Wehrmacht officers, the Soviet Government decided to permit the formation of the Free Germany Committee. A conference, consisting of a curious mixture of veteran German Communists (including Walter Ulbricht, today Chairman of the GDR State Council), non-party German emigrees, and officers and soldiers of the Wehrmacht, met in Moscow on July 12th and 13th 1943, and issued a manifesto. Some passages from this manifesto are worth quoting; it is important to remember that it was issued when Hitler still appeared to be near the height of his power:

"The National Committee of Free Germany, consisting of workers and writers, soldiers and officers, trade union leaders and politicians, people of differing views and religious faiths, who a year ago would have considered such unity almost impossible, expresses the thoughts and hopes of Germans who are filled with alarm for their native land. Hitler is dragging Germany into an abyss. The armies of Britain and America are at the gates of Europe. The day is near when blows from all directions will fall simultaneously on Germany...

"For years Hitler prepared for this war of expansion. He threw down the gage to the most powerful nations in the world. He has disgraced the name of our people; he is guilty of arousing the hatred which surrounds Germany today.

"If the German people continue to allow themselves to be led to ruin, each day of war will not only further exhaust Germany, but increase its guilt. If the German people find the courage to prove by deeds that they are determined to free Germany of Hitler, then they will win for themselves the right to decide their own fate; this is the only way to save the freedom, the honour and the existence of the German nation.

"The formation of a genuine, national German Government is the immediate task; this government must immediately cease hostilities, withdraw the German troops within the frontiers of Germany, relinquish all conquered territory, and sue for peace.

"Our aim is a free Germany, a strong democratic power which will have nothing in common with the overthrown regime. Our aim is the complete abolition of all laws based on national or racial hatred; restoration and extension of political rights; the return to the legal owners of all property stolen by the fascist rulers; confiscation of the property of those responsible for the war; a just and unsparing trial for war criminals."

This broad programme gained many adherents amongst German POWs, and the movement was reinforced in September 1943 when four captured Wehrmacht generals added their names. Many junior officers who had previously felt bound by their oath of allegiance to Hitler subsequently joined the movement. Later Field Marshal Von Paulus, the senior German officer in Soviet hands, also joined, and this explains the use of his name in subsequent myths about the "Von Paulus Army".

But if it was not an army, what did the Free Germany Committee actually do? It failed in its big objective of overthrowing Hitler and forming a new, democratic German Government; but its small-scale front-line work saved the lives of tens of thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of soldiers on both sides of the front; it may well be that it shortened the war by some weeks.

This front-line work ranged from propaganda across the trenches with loud-speakers and leaflets to the far more dangerous jobs carried out by

specially trained small squads of Free Germany members who crossed the lines dressed in German uniform, and prevailed upon larger and smaller Wehrmacht units to surrender. This last form of activity was naturally particularly successful in the case of German "hedgehogs", large units of the Wehrmacht which had been surrounded by the Red Army, but which sometimes held out for a long period before abandoning the fight. In some cases delegates sent into such hedgehogs by the Free Germany Committee were able to persuade the senior officers to surrender with their men; in very many other cases, the Free German emissaries were executed.

In the great majority of cases, Free Germany Committee members were not involved in actual fighting, though a number of individual German deserters did valuable service with partisan units of the Red Army; but one case is worthy of record in which a group of former Wehrmacht soldiers fought shoulder to shoulder with the Red Army.

In late winter 1945, shortly before the end of the war, the Free Germany Committee sent off a body of volunteers, about one hundred strong, to do front line work on the Silesian sector of the front. On their journey, the Red Army officers accompanying them took the group to inspect Auschwitz Concentration Camp, which had just been liberated. What they saw there shocked them so much that they unanimously petitioned the sector commander of the Red Army to allow them to go into the front line and fight. The sector commander agreed, and this group of former Wehrmacht soldiers fought valiantly as part of the Red Army in the seige of Breslau; many of them were killed.

Today, many of the former Wehrmacht officers and men who first came into contact with anti-fascist ideas when they were in Soviet POW camps, and who joined the Free Germany Committee there, are today helping to build the German Democratic Republic. They are men who worked their passage.

Bibliography: *Probably the best all-round book available on the Free Germany Committee is "Sie kämpften für Deutschland" (They Fought for Germany), Verlag des Ministeriums für Nationale Verteidigung, Berlin 1959, 18.20 marks; this volume, an anthology, consists largely of personal accounts of the front-line work of the Committee.*

A fascinating description of how a professional Prussian officer became a member of the Committee, and of the varying attitudies of his brother officers in POW camps is given by Egbert von Frankenberg in "Meine Entscheidung" (My Decision), Deutscher Militärverlag, Berlin 1963, 7.90 marks.

There is additional useful material in the autobiography of the late General Vincenz Müller "Ich fand das wahre Vaterland" (I Found the Real Fatherland), Deutscher Militärverlag, Berlin 1963, 11.80 marks.

NATO "Modifies" GDR Travel Ban

The NATO Council in Paris has partially lifted the ban on GDR citizens visiting NATO countries, it was officially announced on April 2nd. The ban was imposed in August 1961; since that date, with a very few exceptions, only GDR businessmen have been able to visit member states of the NATO alliance. There has been considerable public pressure, particularly in Britain, Denmark and Holland, for a revision of the ban, which has prevented visits by sports teams, theatre groups, and leading scientists invited to attend international conferences.

The interpretation of the new ruling was still a matter of doubt, since the official announcement stated that travel papers will be granted only to individuals, and teams or delegations will remain barred.

(See comment in "Berlin Notebook" on the back page of this issue).

Application of the ruling will remain in the hands of the Allied Travel Office in West Berlin, a remnant of the four-power administration of Germany in the immediate post-war period. At that time, before the establishment of the two separate German states, the Allied Travel Office performed a useful role in issuing temporary travel documents to Germans travelling abroad. Since 1949, the Allied Travel Office has become superfluous, since both German states issue passports. Most states, including such European states as Sweden and Switzerland, issue visas to GDR citizens on GDR passports; NATO states refuse to do so, and insist that GDR citizens should first obtain travel documents from the Allied Travel Office. In the past such documents have often been refused with no reason given, quite apart from the general ban imposed in 1961.

NATO states cling to the fiction that they cannot recognise GDR passports since they do not recognise the GDR; the weakness of this argument is shown by the fact that the Allied Travel Office "recognises" the GDR every time it issues a temporary travel document, since it only issues such documents on the basis of official GDR identity papers.

Commenting on the NATO announcement, "Neues Deutschland", leading GDR newspaper, stated on April 5th:

"A group of unidentified American, British and French officers claim the right to decide whether a GDR citizen may travel to Denmark or Norway although he already has a visa to visit these countries. This is an intervention not only in the affairs of the GDR, but also in the affairs of the other country.

"GDR athletes travelling abroad shall not be permitted to show the GDR flag, or use the GDR arms. What would the French Government say if, for instance, French sportsmen participating in European championship in the GDR had to remove the tricolour from their sports dress?

"This is obviously absurd, and the very existence of the Allied Travel Office is absurd. The best thing to do would be to liquidate as quickly as possibly this left-over of the Second World War."

Socialist Unity Party for World Conference

The Socialist Unity Party in the GDR gives its full support to the proposal made by the Soviet Communist Party that a meeting of the Communist parties of the world should be held in autumn 1964, the Berlin newspaper "Neues Deutschland" stated on April 5th.

The world conference should be preceded by a meeting between delegations of the Soviet Communist Party and the Chinese Communist Party.

The leading article in "Neues Deutschland" stated that the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party were organising the splitting of the world communist movement. They were giving large financial support to Trotskyite, nationalist and petty bourgeois groups in the western countries which were establishing splitting groups. They were also trying to wreck relations between the socialist countries in Europe.

The Socialist Unity Party stood four-square behind the Soviet Communist Party in the present dispute.

Women in the GDR

The steps taken in the German Democratic Republic to help women to play their full part in society were detailed in an official report published early in April by the Confederation of Free German Trade Unions (FDGB) in preparation for an International Labour Organisation Conference on "Working Women in a Changing World", to be held in Geneva in June. A copy of the report has been forwarded to the Secretary-General of the ILO. Here are the main points in the report:

The laws passed in the GDR, with the co-operation of the trade unions, directly serve the workers' interests. They accord with the conventions and recommendations of the International Labour Organisation and, in fact, often go beyond them.

The concern which our government shows for women in all social spheres, and the fact that women play an active part in political, economic and social life, shows that they are genuinely emancipated. Equality is guaranteed in the GDR Constitution, and it is laid down by law that women have the same rights and duties as men. There are no special wage groups for women, for example; they are guaranteed equal pay for equal work. Article 7 of the Constitution states:

"Men and women have equal rights. All laws and provisions infringing upon the equality of women are revoked."

Article 18 stresses that:

"Men and women, adults and youths are entitled to the same wage for doing the same work. Women enjoy special protection in employment. A law of the Republic shall provide for the establishment of facilities enabling women to reconcile their tasks as citizens and workers with their duties as wives and mothers."

These basic principles have been anchored in various laws and decrees, the most important of which are the Law on Mother and Child Care and the Rights of Women, promulgated in 1950, and the relevant passages in the Labour Code of 1961.

Paragraph 3 of the Labour Code states:

"The socialist state guarantees basic rights irrespective of age, sex, nationality, race and religion." And paragraph 40 states: "Every working person has the right to equal pay for equal work, regardless of age, sex, nationality, race or religion."

The trade unions base their work for the advancement of women on these laws. All laws which prevented women from getting on in the world have been annulled in the GDR. 46 per cent of all employed persons — over three and a half million — are women; they work on an equal footing with men in all branches of the national economy. They can do this because the GDR government and trade unions are constantly concerned with providing the facilities which women need to make their working and living conditions easier.

In December 1963 there was accommodation in creches for 149 out of every 1,000 children under three and in nursery schools for 506 out of every 1,000 children between 3 and 6 — an increase of about 85 per cent compared with 1955. The fees are low: 21 marks a month per child in daily creches, 47 marks a month in weekly creches and 90 marks a month in permanent babies' homes. In day nurseries 8.75 marks a month is charged for food. There are reduced rates in all these institutions for two or more children of the same family. (For comparison: average industriel wages are just under 600 marks monthly, ed.)

In 1962 there were 5,737 after-school clubs, where school children get a cheap midday meal, help with their homework and recreation. There are now nearly 42,000 qualified nursery school teachers and about 20,000 qualified after-school club teachers (junior school teachers' training).

Another aspect of care for working women is mother and child protection. In accordance with the ILO conventions, laws have been passed which provide expectant mothers, mothers and children with a maximum of social security. Paragraph 128 of the Labour Code states:

"1) Together with the enterprises, the local authorities must set up and expand suitable facilities for the care of sick children.

"2) Working mothers must be given leave from work, if necessary, to care for their sick children.

"3) Mothers living alone receive assistance in such cases from the social insurance service; they receive sick pay and compensation from their place of work to a total amount of 90 per cent of their average net earnings, for a period up to two work days.

"4) If mothers living alone are obliged to remain away from work for more than two days because no other care can be found for their sick children, the social insurance service pays assistance at the rate of sick pay, for a period of not more than four weeks in the calendar year."

Expectant mothers enjoy special protection. Factory managers are required to provide them with work suitable to their condition and to guarantee them further employment.

Paragraph 129 of the Labour Code lays down that:

"2) Pregnant and nursing mothers are not to be employed at work which can, in the view of the factory doctor or the doctor in charge of the expectant mothers' advisory centre, be dangerous to the health of mother or child.

"3) If a pregnant or nursing mother cannot, as a result of medical advice, be employed at her usual job, she must be provided with easier or more suitable work. If the wages for this job are less than her previous average earnings, the difference is to be made up."

During pregnancy, mothers receive free medical advice and, if necessary, free holidays in convalescent homes for mothers. There are no charges for lying-in and medical care in maternity clinics. More than 93 per cent of all babies were born in hospitals or maternity homes in the GDR in 1962.

According to GDR law, women may not be dismissed from their jobs during pregnancy or during the first six months after giving birth. They are entitled to 14 weeks' pregnancy leave with pay (average net earnings). If desired, a mother can also take additional unpaid leave up to the end of her child's first year without being dismissed from her place of work. Nursing mothers are entitled to two nursing periods of 45 minutes each during working hours, for a period up to six months, without loss of pay. For these and other reasons, the maternal and infant mortality rates are low in the GDR; the infant mortality rate was down to 3.1 per cent in 1962.

Mothers receive financial assistance at the birth of each child; 500 marks for the first, 600 marks for the second, 700 marks for the third, 850 marks for the fourth and 1,000 marks for each additional child. The government also provides regular monthly allowances for all children.

All these regulations apply to married and unmarried mothers, since all laws discriminating against unmarried mothers have been annulled in the GDR.

All higher educational institutions are open to women. Nearly 30 per cent of all university students were women in 1963. 3,385 women took university correspondence courses in 1962 and over 10,000 women finished technical school correspondence courses as technicians and engineers in that year.

Facilities for women to improve their qualifications are also provided in the factory and village academies. Nearly 175,000 women took courses in factory academies in 1962, where 19,352 women qualified as skilled workers, 2,728 as foremen, and over 5,000 skilled women workers went on to university or technical college. Housewives can also take skilled workers' training courses.

Nearly 14,000 women farmers took agricultural training courses in village academies in the winter of 1961/1962.

Just over 73,000 women industrial and office workers took evening courses in the People's Colleges in 1962, mainly in languages or in preparation for school-leaving certificate.

All this guarantees that there can be no discrimination against women in training and taking their rightful place in social life.

A large number of women already occupy leading positions in the GDR; a woman industrial worker, a woman farmer and a woman scientist are members of the State Council; there are two women members of the Presidium of the People's Chamber, one of them a former weaver; there is one woman Deputy Prime Minister and the Ministers of Justice and of Education are both women.

27 per cent of members of the People's Chamber and nearly 30 per cent of members of district parliaments are women. Over 30 per cent of all judges, 20 per cent of state attorneys and about 35 per cent of lay judges are women. The Director-General of ADN (GDR news agency) and the Director of Berlin Radio are also women. There are now over 40,000 junior and over 22,000 senior school women teachers.

Women are very fully represented in the trade unions and 95 per cent of all working women are trade union members. 41 per cent of the National Executive of the FDGB are women, there are hundreds of women on the district executives and central executives of the industrial unions and thousands in the area executives, while 388,455 women work on the lower union committees.

All these facts demonstrate that, in accordance with the ILO conventions, especially conventions 3, 89, 100 and 111, all discrimination against women has been completely abolished in the GDR and that women are taking an increasingly prominent and responsible part in political, economic and social life.

At its 6th Congress in November 1963, the FDGB resolved to concentrate its efforts on helping more women to qualify for leading posts and to learn more about science and technology.

The social conditions necessary to make life easier, especially for women, have been created in the GDR. The FDGB now regards it as its main task, with the help of the government authorities, to expand and perfect all the social services provided.

The FDGB is prepared to discuss the problems of working women in the GDR with the ILO and is also prepared to extend facilities to representatives of this international body to visit the GDR and see for themselves how the GDR promotes the interests of working women.

Pipe-Line Plant Starts Operations

The first plant in the GDR's giant oil refinery in Schwedt on the Oder started its trial run on April 1st. It will be working at normal capacity by July 1st and is scheduled to process 1.2 million tons of crude oil by the end of the year. This means about 6,000 tons — potentially worth about 1.6 million marks — of oil a day. Schwedt is the western terminus of the big new pipeline which brings oil to eastern and central Europe direct from Soviet oil-fields.

The initial products will be standard and high octane benzine, Diesel oil and bitumen for road-building and insulating purposes. When the second plant is completed in 1965 the refinery will be processing about 4 million tons of crude oil a year and by 1970 it is expected to process about 8 million tons a year. Construction is being steadily speeded up by the use of more and more standard pre-fabricated components.

Provision of huge supplies of cheaply transported crude oil will greatly improve the situation in the GDR chemical industry, which is still largely based upon lignite, processing of which is complicated and expensive. It will be possible to produce cheaply a steadily increasing quantity of synthetics such as polyvinylchloride, polyvinylacetate and polyacrylnitril for the plastics industry and of various aromatics such as benzol, toluol and xylol, which are the basis of synthetic fibres like dederon and lanon (the GDR types of synthetic silk and wool). Chemical fertiliser and new kinds of chemicals for livestock feeding can also be produced cheaply.

This huge project got under way late in 1958, after surveying work was completed for the worlds' longest pipeline, which brings oil from the borders of Asia into the heart of Europe. The line is about 2,500 miles long and stretches from Kuibyshev in the oil fields of the Urals right across the Soviet Union; one branch supplies oil to Czechoslovakia and Hungary and the other supplies Poland and the GDR. This is about twice as long as the Trans-Arabian pipe-line from the Persian Gulf to Sidon in Lebanon.

Because of the cold winters in Eastern Europe, pipes had to be laid at least six feet deep so as to prevent the oil freezing. Pumping stations have been built every 30 to 60 miles along its entire length.

The pipes for the final stretch connecting the Polish refinery at Plock, northwest of Warsaw, with Schwedt were all made in the GDR and a GDR firm in Dresden made the special automatic motors for the pumping stations along the route.

The pipe-line itself was completed last December, when the first Soviet oil flowed into GDR tanks in Schwedt.

There are at present about 8,000 people employed on the Schwedt project, including many building and chemical engineers and skilled and semi-skilled building and chemical workers who come from big enterprises all over the GDR. Many of them have decided to remain in Schwedt until the entire refinery is finished. They have now taken up a challenge issued by chemical workers in the Premnitz chemical fibre works in honour of the coming 15th anniversary of the foundation of the GDR. The Premnitz works, which employs about 6,500 people, produces dederon and other synthetic fibres, as well as important industrial chemicals. Premnitz workers have now called on all GDR workers to improve quality, rationalise and speed up production, reduce production costs and improve their own technical qualifications.

Liner for USRR

A 19,000-ton passenger ship left the slips in Wismar docks in the GDR early in April. It was built for the Soviet Union and has accomodation for 750 passengers. This is the second of a series and the keel for the third has already been laid.

NOTES ON NAZIS

A West German neo-nazi publisher, facing charges of circulating pro-nazi literature, has claimed that he was only complying with suggestions made by ex-Chancellor Adenauer and ex-Defence Minister Franz-Josef Strauss.

The publisher, Helmut Cramer, himself a former SS man, published a series of books praising the "heroic deeds of the Waffen SS", the military formations of Himmler's black-uniformed guards.

The books were so revolting that even "broad minded" West German public prosecutors were forced to take action, and charges of circulating neo-nazi literature were lodged against Cramer. In his defence, Cramer claimed that he had been encouraged by speeches made by Adenauer and Strauss. He cited a speech delivered in Hanover in 1953, in which Adenauer stated: "The men of the Waffen SS were soldiers like all the others; we must make it clear abroad that the Waffen SS had nothing to do with the Gestapo, that the Waffen SS never shot Jews, but that they were feared by the Soviets as fine soldiers."

Cramer quoted Strauss as writing on March 21st 1957: "You know what I think about the Waffen SS; I include them in my admiration for the German soldiers in the world war."

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Five SS officers are at present on trial in Brunswick, West Germany, on charges of murdering thousands of Jews in the Pinsk area of the Soviet Union in August 1941. One of the defence witnesses at the trial was Rudolf Mäker, former SS lieutenant in the SS unit concerned in the mass murders; today Mäker is serving in the Bundeswehr in the rank of lieutenant colonel. Another defence witness, SS lieutenant Werner Geissler, is today major in the Bundeswehr.

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A West German court, sitting at Kiel, sentenced former SS lieutenant Hans Graalfs to three years imprisonment on April 8th for murder in 760 cases; he was found guilty of killing Jews in the Minsk area. Graalfs will serve a maximum of ten months, since the court subtracted from his sentence the period he has spent in prison on remand, plus a ten-month term of post-war internment. The sentence works out at about ten hours per murder.

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The West German "Office for the Protection of the Constitution", the internal security service, is trying to find other civil service posts for 16 senior officers who have been exposed as nazi criminals, Minister of the Interior Hermann Höcherl announced at the beginning of April. All of the officers concerned served during the nazi period in the SS, the Gestapo or similar agencies. There was a public outcry in West Germany last autumn when it was disclosed that these nazi officers were tapping telephones in breach of the West German Constitution. Most of the nazis have been re-installed in high posts in the Federal Administrative Office in Bonn.

Spy Pilots Deported

The pilot and crew of the US reconnaissance plane shot down over the GDR on March 10th by a Soviet fighter were deported to West Germany at the end of March after consultations between the GDR and the Soviet Union.

It was officially announced in Berlin that investigations had proved that the plane did not "stray across the frontier" but that it had flown over the GDR for espionage purposes. In view of the fact that the United States had expressed its regret, and given assurances that there would be no repetition of the incident, an exception would be made in the case, and the crew deported instead of having to answer charges of espionage.

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On April 5th, GDR frontier forces detained three British military policemen who had entered GDR territory over the frontier with West Berlin. The military policemen were released four hours later. A British spokesman said that disciplinary action would be taken. The British soldiers were undoubtedly on East German territory when detained, the spokesman said.

Bonn Troops in Angola?

West German troop contingents have been sent to protect West German investments in the Portuguese colony of Angola, a representative of the Angolan Liberation Movement announced in Cairo on April 4th. "Bonn officers arrived in Angola as instructors in September 1963, and they have now been followed by special West German units used to guard iron, copper and diamond mines in the interior" the Angolan representative stated.

Bonn Blames US in IG Farben Scandal

A Bonn Government spokesman blamed the US authorities for the "on-again off-again" decoration of war criminal Heinrich Bütefisch in March. Early in March Bütefisch was awarded the "Grand Cross of the Federal Republic" for his meritorious services; fourteen days later West German President Heinrich Lübke had to ask him to give back the decoration, after it had been pointed out that Bütefisch was sentenced to six years imprisonment by a US Court in 1947 for his war crimes as production chief of an IG Farben chemical factory in Auschwitz Concentration Camp.

On March 25th, a West German government spokesman said that the US authorities were responsible for the whole affair since they had failed to notify the German authorities of Bütefisch's conviction. Observers in Bonn pointed out that Bütefisch had been one of 24 defendants at a well-publicised trial, and that the West German authorities knew all about his record because they had intervened in 1951 to obtain cancellation or commutation of his sentence, and the sentences passed on hundreds of other nazi criminals.

(A full account of this intervention is given by US diplomat Charles Thayer, in his book "The Unquiet Germans", published in London by Michael Joseph. General Heusinger and General Speidel personally warned the Americans that if the war criminals were not released, West Germany would not raise a new army. See GERMAN REPORT, December 23rd 1960)

Two other IG Farben directors implicated in war crimes have been decorated with the Grand Cross of the Federal Republic, and to date they have not been de-decorated. They are Friedrich Jähne, today chairman of the board of Farbwerke Hoechst, sentenced to 18 months for war crimes at the same trial as Bütefisch, and Fritz Gajewski, director of Bayer-Leverkusen. Gajewski was tried for war crimes, but acquitted for lack of evidence, though he had been deeply implicated in many nazi crimes.

Another IG Farben criminal, Fritz ter Meer, sentenced to 7 years imprisonment in 1947, resigned at the beginning of April from his post as chairman of the board of Bayer-Leverkusen. He apparently wished to avoid repercussions because of his nazi record.

BERLIN NOTEBOOK

By John Peet

What sort of books do people read in the German Democratic Republic? This was a question sprung upon me by a visitor not long ago, and I was slightly baffled; all I could tell him was that they read lots of practically all sorts, except sadistic and militaristic books, which are barred.

Just after he had left, I found part of the answer I should have been able to give him in an East Berlin weekly, "Freie Welt", which has been conducting a poll on this very subject. The magazine queried one hundred older "VIPs" — ministers, scientists, doctors, journalists, judges and teachers — and one hundred men and women in the early twenties, chosen at random, on their favourite books.

Poll Prejudice

Such a poll is always liable to be a little misleading, since many people tend to reply with the titles of the books they think they ought to have been reading, instead of admitting frankly that they like thrillers, but I found some of the results interesting.

The prominent pollees were asked to name the two dozen books which had influenced them most: they gave the titles of no fewer than 749 books by 372 different authors, but many of the titles in this biggish library were only mentioned once. The books which headed the list included several pretty predictable all-time classics, such as Tolstoy's "War and Peace", Zola's "Germinal", Gorki's "Mother" and Thomas Mann's "Buddenbrooks". Not surprisingly, since people who hold prominent positions in the GDR tend to have been active in the progressive movement in the 1920s and 1930s, they also voted very frequently for progressive books published in those years, such as "Quiet Flows the Don" by Sholokhov, "The Case of Sergeant Grisha" by Arnold Zweig, and "Ten Days that Shook the World" by the American revolutionary John Reed. Contemporary books were not very prominent, the main ones being "The Seventh Cross" by GDR authoress Anna Seghers, and "Naked Among Wolves", GDR best-seller on a concentration camp theme by Bruno Apitz. The only contemporary English-language author named was Hemingway, for "The Old Man and the Sea." Incidentally, the most popular author of all was Soviet writer Mikhail Sholokhov, named three times for "Quiet Don", "Virgin Soil Upturned" and "Human Fate".

Turning to the 20-year-old readers, we find that Sholokhov is their favourite author too, with the same three titles. But by far the most-read individual book was "Naked Among Wolves" by Bruno Apitz, the anti-nazi resistance book mentioned above, which is available in an English translation published by Seven Seas Books. 89 out of one hundred young people had read this book. The older classics, like Tolstoy and Zola, did not show up in the youth poll. I was interested, but not surprised, to note that the "classical" German classics, like Goethe and Schiller, were ignored as favourite reading by both young and old; their works are available in umpteen editions in the GDR, but perhaps they are damned by the fact that they are the authors that pupils have to read at school.

Interesting, and rather alarming, in both the youth listing and the middle-age listing was that writers of today were sparsely represented: those that came high on both lists, such as Mikhail Sholokhov, Anna Seghers and Bruno Apitz, were almost always named for novels dealing with the revolutionary period in the Soviet Union, or the nazi period in Germany. The really popular books on the world of today obviously still have to be written.

Easter Errors

Perhaps we may blame a pre-Easter rush in our office for an unfortunate clutter of errors in the article "What's On in East Berlin Theatres" on page 55 of our last issue. Friends whose grasp of the sex of German nouns is firmer than mine rushed to inform me that "mahogany" is neuter in German, and not masculine, and that Brecht's famous piece is therefore "Das kleine Mahagonny" and not "Der"; and Carl Zuckmayer spells his name with a "y" in the middle and not an "i".

We managed to get the name of the famous Czech popular hero, the Good Soldier Schweyk wrong too. Here there may be a little justification, since at least three variants of his name are already hallowed by use. Jaroslav Hasek, who invented him, wrote the name Svejk (pronounced Shvake to rhyme with lake); there should be a little tick over the S but my printers cannot provide it. This was Germanised in the first and all subsequent German editions of the book as Schwejk; this in its turn was half-Anglicised into Schweyk when the book appeared in English; and this last was the form chosen by Brecht when he wrote his play "Schweyk in the Second World War". In our last issue we produced a fourth variant "Shweyk", but this has nothing to recommend it, and is herewith corrected.

Dangerous Doubles

Tennis singles are OK, but tennis doubles are subversive? This would appear to be the logical conclusion to be drawn from the odd decision of the NATO powers to grant visas to sportsmen from the GDR if they are individuals, but not if they are members of a team. We report the decision on page 60.

If this Alice-in-Wonderland decision is strictly applied, (and the Allied Travel Office in West Berlin, a faceless group of officials which is famous for its odd decisions), then obviously Herr Schmidt, the GDR tennis player, can get permission to play at Wimbledon; if he has a partner, and they want to play in the doubles as a team, then they will be turned down.

This is an extreme case, and is not likely to arise soon in this form, since tennis is not a game at which GDR sportsmen are up to international standards; but the same ruling will apparently apply in the case of an individual swimmer (harmless) and a relay team of four (dangerous).

I hear unofficially that the bureaucrats are now hotly arguing whether a GDR symphony orchestra or theatre company shall be regarded as a team, or as a group of individuals. How crazy can you get?

The Gas-Dog Cometh

I refuse to accept any responsibility for the accuracy of the following story, but "Neues Deutschland", official newspaper of the GDR's Socialist Unity Party, reported apparently seriously on April 7th that a dog named Danka is now being used to check a new long-distance gas-main from the coal-fields to Berlin. Danka, an Alsatian, sniffs the gas-main and points out places where the gas is escaping, "Neues Deutschland" stated. With a bit more training he will probably be able to fill out reports in triplicate.

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